

ingly we stand by our conclusion that the use of harder drugs was "substantially lower" than the use of marijuana, which is clearly the illicit drug of choice among our subjects as it is for similar age groups in the U.S. population.

*Richard H. Seiden, PhD, MPH
School of Public Health
University of California at Berkeley*

MANAGEMENT PROBLEM PERSISTS

While both program and contraceptive use continuation rates have come into widespread usage in the evaluation of family planning programs, their use almost always places in a more favorable light the rural clinics, where patients tend to be older, married, "settled," and parous.

On the other hand, clinics where a large percentage of the patient population is younger, unmarried, and nonparous, and among whom there is a sporadic or "discontinuant" need for contraception—these clinics come off looking poorly in continuation studies simply by virtue of the population they serve.

To a family planning administrator unschooled in the subtleties of life table interpretation, such studies may

seem to indicate that continuation is good and noncontinuation is bad. Actually, the studies only indicate that marrieds are sexually active (and hence in need of contraception) in a more regular and predictable pattern than unmarries. As if one's personal experience would not prove this, one's experience working in an urban family planning program with a large unmarried, and student, population, would daily reinforce that conclusion.

I have no particular criticism of the three articles in your last issue which dealt with the continuation problem. I only offer the observation that what persists is a management problem in which the manager's sophisticated statistical studies either tell him little that he didn't already know, or are presented in a form too abstract or too esoteric for him to understand, or are, in the end, *interpreted* by those not directly involved in the administrative process.

*Michael C. Finley
Director, Family Planning
Metropolitan Health Department
Nashville, TN*

READ THE LOBBYING REPORT

Margaret J. Mahoney, RN, in her critical response (*AJPH* 65:748, 1975) to the *AJPH* editorial "The Right to

Choose Abortion," disputes the allegation that the antiabortion lobby has "strong financial backing" and demands proof.

She might find it informative to read the lobbying report filed by the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, Inc. The National Committee is the legal lobby for the American Catholic Bishops. It is supported by church money from 145 of the 169 dioceses across the country. In 1974 the National Committee raised \$361,000 through diocesan contributions ranging from \$50 to \$25,000, according to their own lobbying report.

These figures show just the tip of the iceberg, since many dioceses give directly to local antiabortion groups rather than funneling money through the National Committee. The Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese, for example, in its annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1973, listed a gift of \$36,377 to Pennsylvanians For Human Life, a state antiabortion organization.

Most other dioceses are a little more discreet, and camouflage their contributions under listings such as "family life education programs." Perhaps this is the practice in Ms. Mahoney's home state, and hence would explain her ignorance concerning the Church's monetary impact.

*Pamela Lee Lowry
President
Constitutional Defense Project
Boston, MA*

APOLOGIA PRO VERBA SUA

Discriminating readers will have noted a contrast between the Editor's August promise of quality in journal content and the accompanying and ensuing reality. The contrast will continue through most of the year because of commitments made prior to July. Later this year some improvement should be discernible. Early in 1976 outer face lifting and inner body strengthening should become apparent. Manuscripts accepted this fall are being scheduled for publication in the first quarter of 1976. By then, the interval between receipt and publication of papers should be about 6 months. The quality of what will appear is inevitably associated with the quality of what is submitted. Within a 1000-5000 word span well planned meaningful research, well executed timely position papers, and well written reviews of the state of the art are eagerly solicited and will be processed promptly.

The Editor